

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Spencer Public Library

other names/site number 199-605-36022

2. Location

street & number 110 East Market Street N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Spencer N/A ☐ vicinity

state IN code IN county Owen code 119 zip code 47460

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined to be eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Spencer Public Library
Name of Property

Owen IN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-state
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/civic
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

CRAFTSMAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1912-1957

Significant Dates

1912

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

PARKER, WILSON B., ARCHITECT

KEMMER, A.E., BUILDER

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination if individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6
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5	2	0	6	0	3
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4	3	4	8	4	2	1
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Zone

Easting

Northing

2

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3

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Zone

Easting

Northing

4

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--	--	--	--	--	--

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura Thayer, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization N/A date February 14, 2007

street & number 4950 S 150 E telephone 812-372-6806

city or town Columbus state IN zip code 47201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Owen County Preservations Inc, c/o Bonnie Tinsley

street & number 379 West Hillside Avenue telephone 812-829-2738

city or town Spencer state IN zip code 47460

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number 7 Page No. 1 Spencer Public Library, Owen County, IN

The Spencer Public Library is located on the southeast corner of E. Market and S. Washington Street, on the north half of lot 98 of the original plat for the town. The library is on the Courthouse Square, across from the Spencer Town Hall (left in photo 1) The 1907 Sanborn map shows two one-story commercial buildings and a dwelling on the north half of lot 98. The 1912 map shows those buildings gone and the new library building in their place.¹ After the library was constructed, buildings were erected to the south and east (photo 3).

The library is a one-story, Craftsman style building with multi colored brick on all sides. The raised basement is faced in smooth limestone on the front and sides of the building, and brick on the back. The cavetto-shaped stone water table extends around the entire structure. The building has a low-pitched hip roof. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles. The original roof material is not known. The main façade faces north and is three bays wide. The entry is in the central, projecting bay of this facade. It is reached by a set of concrete steps with stone wings. The doors themselves are replacement aluminum and glass doors. The original wood doorframe is intact, and is flanked by sidelights, with a segmental-arched transom above. There is an elaborate stone surround, a compound segmental arch with a large cavetto molding that extends nearly to the eaves. A decorative scroll serves as a keystone for the arch. A stone panel engraved "LIBRARY" is located between the arch and the eaves (photo 7). There is a tall, interior chimney on the west side of the building.

Large, tall openings flank the entry and contain grouped, double hung windows with multi-light transoms (photo 8). At the basement level on each side of the entry are square windows with flat arches. There are modern aluminum storm windows installed on the exterior of all windows. A stone stringcourse extends around the front and sides of the building at a level that is the base of the window transoms on the front of the building. It continues around the tops of the windows, serving as window hoods for windows on the front and sides of the building. Windows on the main facade have stone sills. Below the windows are recessed brick panels with stone accents and stone corbels.

Under the bead board eaves are a cornice and curved wooden brackets, which rest on stone corbels (photo 9). On the front of the building, there is pair of these brackets on each of the corners of the entry bay. On each of the end bays, there is a single bracket on the side closest to the entry and a pair of brackets on the outside end. On each of the building's sides are three pairs of brackets. The rear façade has a single bracket at each end. The building has metal gutters and downspouts. The specific material is not known, nor is it known whether these are originals or replacements.

¹ Sanborn Map Company, Maps of Spencer, Indiana, 1907, 1912.

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The west façade, which faces S. Washington Street, has an entry at the basement level. At this opening are double aluminum and glass replacement doors. At the basement level on each side of the door is a double hung wood window with multi light sash. There are two groups of three double hung windows located high on this side of the building, reflecting the placement of bookshelves on the first floor (photo 3). Under each group of windows is a recessed panel in brick with stone accents. The east façade of the building is almost identical, except with three windows at the basement level and no door (photo 5).

The rear (south) façade is less detailed than the other facades (photo 4). The stone facing at the basement level is not carried around to this side of the building, though other details are, such as the brackets under the eaves and the stone water table. There are four window openings on the main level of the rear façade which contain double hung wood windows similar to those on other façades. The westernmost opening contains a single window, and the other openings have paired windows. The two center openings are high on the wall, again as an indication of bookshelves inside. The easternmost window pair has multi light transoms. There is one basement window on this façade, which is at the east end under the transomed window. Windows on this façade have plain openings with brick sills. There is a single door on this façade. This opening is near the west end, between the first and second windows, and is reached by a set of concrete steps. The opening has a plain metal replacement door. The transom has been covered on the inside.

Inside the building, the entryway has double wood and glass transomed doors (photos 11, 13). Steps in the entryway are marble, and the floor is tile (photo 12). The first floor of the library is open except for an office in the southwest corner. The librarian's desk area is opposite the entry and is flanked by tall, oak columns (photo 14). The desk is no longer in the building, and its present location is not known. Behind this, there is a fireplace on the south wall. The opening is covered and the fireplace is no longer in use. It has green ceramic tile around the opening, and a dark oak mantle (photos 15, 16). On the east and west sides of the first floor are areas for reading and book stacks (photos 17, 19). The original bookshelves have been removed and their location is not known. The original cast iron radiators are intact on this level of the building (photo 20). Most of the floor is carpeted with a pine sub floor underneath. The office has the original maple floor. Walls and ceilings are plaster. Baseboards and window and door trim are oak. The tall windows have oak frames and sash, oak sills and aprons, and plaster reveals on the sides and tops of the openings. The smaller windows that are located high on the walls have oak frames and sash and plaster reveals all around (photo 18).

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The basement, accessed from the first floor via a straight stairway in the southwest corner of the building, contains two rooms on the east side which were originally one large lecture room. The northernmost part of this split room is shown in photo 21. There are two steel structural columns, one in each of the east side rooms. The configuration of the west side of the basement is intact. Here are restrooms, a mechanical room, and storage room along a hallway that leads to an exit door. Along the hallway, openings for these various rooms have simple wood panel doors with wood trim (photo 22). The original basement walls are plaster, and the new wall that divides the original lecture room is drywall. The floors are covered with carpet. The ceiling is suspended acoustical tile. There is wood trim around the windows, which has been painted.

The floor plan of the building is based on Plan B of James Bertram's "Notes on Library Buildings" (see Statement of Significance). Plan B indicates a central entry with the librarian's desk near the rear of the building, and reading rooms on each side. In Bertram's plan, a stairway in the rear accesses the basement where a lecture room is shown on one side, and utility rooms on the opposite side. The library building built for Spencer is very similar to Plan B, with only a few variations, such as the location of the stairway to the basement and the presence of a fireplace (Bertram "Notes" discouraged fireplaces).

The building has a high degree of integrity and is nearly in its original condition. There have been no additions and very little remodeling. The most significant changes are the division of the basement lecture room into two rooms, replacement of exterior doors, and removal of the librarians desk and bookshelves.

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Section number 8 Page No. 4 Spencer Public Library, Owen County, IN

The Spencer Public Library, built in 1912, is significant under Criterion A in the area of Education and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The building was funded through a grant from the Carnegie Corporation and served as a public library until 1997. The period of significance is 1912-1957. During this time, it was an important part of the town's cultural life. Designed by Indianapolis architect Wilson B. Parker (1867-1937), it is also significant as the finest example of the Craftsman style of architecture in Owen County.

History

The library is located in the Town of Spencer, the seat of Owen County. The town's economy was historically based on farming, milling, and shipping. After completion of the Vincennes Railroad through the town, it was expanded to include coal mining and stone quarrying. Tourism was also important after the establishment of McCormick's Creek Park nearby, Indiana's first state park.

The town's first library may have been one funded through a bequest from William Maclure (1763-1840). Maclure made provisions in his will for funding of Indiana public libraries. These libraries were established in the 1850s and 1860s. One was started in Spencer, but little information was found about it. In 1906, after the Maclure library had declined for lack of continued funding, a subscription library was established and was housed on the second floor of the Town Hall (36040).

Townpeople took steps to construct a new library building by securing a \$10,000 grant from the Carnegie Foundation in 1911. The architect hired to design the plans was Wilson B. Parker of Indianapolis. The contract for the building was let on July 29, 1911 to A.E. Kemmer, a Lafayette construction company, for \$7,930. The building was dedicated on January 1, 1912. The first librarian was Reba Davis.

In the 1970s the library became a county institution. It was moved in 1997 to a larger building on South Montgomery Street. The Carnegie library building became an annex to the courthouse after that time, housing the Owen County archives and probation department. Currently, there are plans underway to convert the building to a community center.

Public libraries in Indiana have their roots in New Harmony's Workingman's Institute, the oldest continuously operating library in the state. This library was founded in 1838 by William Maclure. Maclure was a businessman, geologist and social reformer whose will included funds for establishing public libraries throughout Indiana. Due to legal battles, Maclure's wishes were not carried out immediately after his death. By the late 1850s, however, public libraries

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were beginning to be started with Maclure grants. Through this means, 144 libraries in Indiana, including libraries in 89 of the 92 counties, were organized and received \$500 for the purchase of books. By 1876, however, only 18 of the original libraries had survived.²

Maclure libraries were started in two Owen County communities, Spencer and Gosport, but it is not known where the libraries were located and whether those buildings survive. An 1884 Owen County history briefly mentioned a county library that had once contained 2,000 volumes. The author stated that "the library now presents a ragged and forlorn appearance and most of the books of value are gone."³ This may have been a reference to the Spencer library that was funded through a Maclure grant.

Although most of the Maclure libraries did not survive, they established the importance of public libraries, leading to a system through which they would flourish. This was partly accomplished through the Indiana General Assembly which influenced library development through supportive legislation. Pertinent legislation included: an 1852 act enabling library associations to raise money by selling stock, an 1856 act providing for township libraries, the School Law of 1871, which empowered school boards to levy additional tax for the purpose of establishing and maintaining public libraries, and an 1899 act authorizing local tax levies for libraries. The 1899 act also established the Public Library Commission, an agency that was in place to work with communities after Carnegie grants became available.

During the early twentieth century, literacy rose with compulsory school attendance. Libraries were built throughout the state, largely because of grants available through the Carnegie Corporation. One hundred sixty four Carnegie-funded libraries were built in Indiana, more than in any other state. One hundred forty six of these are extant.⁴ These libraries were important institutions in each town, as they made books available to the entire community. Libraries were particularly significant in small towns such as Spencer, where they represented one of the few cultural institutions.

² Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003), 17; Josephine Mirabella Elliott, "William Maclure: Patron Saint of Indiana Libraries," *Indiana Magazine of History*, vol. XCIV, no. 2, (Indianapolis: Indiana University Department of History and the Indiana Historical Society, June 1998), 187.

³ Charles Blanchard, ed., *County of Owen Indiana* (Spencer: Owen County Historical and Genealogical Society Publications, 1995, reproduction of 1884 history), 612.

⁴ Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003), 16.

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Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) made a fortune in the steel industry before becoming a philanthropist. Between 1898 and 1917, he carried out a program of funding public libraries, giving nearly \$40,000,000 for buildings in over 1,400 U.S. communities. After 1911, grants for libraries were distributed through the newly created Carnegie Corporation. In 1917, consideration of applications was suspended because of wartime shortages and was not resumed. Funds for grants that had been awarded previously were allocated after World War I.⁵

A key person in the library program was James Bertram, Carnegie's secretary from 1897 to 1914, and secretary to the Carnegie Corporation from 1911 to 1934. Bertram reviewed library requests and made recommendations in regards to funding. There were only a few requirements that a town had to meet to be awarded a grant, including providing a site for the library building, and committing to maintaining it with annual taxes equal to 10 percent of the grant.⁶

Before 1908, a town receiving a grant could build its library the way it wanted. That year, Bertram began to require that plans be submitted. In 1911, he issued a pamphlet entitled "Notes on Library Buildings," which was sent as a guide to communities that received Carnegie grants. Bertram felt that many of the early buildings had elaborate exteriors and inefficient interiors. He wrote the pamphlet, which included minimum standards for library design, after consulting with architects and librarians.⁷

Among Bertram's suggestions were that libraries be rectangular in plan and have one story plus a raised basement. Ceilings on the main level were to be 12 to 15 foot high, and windows on the sides and rear of the building needed to be high, so as to allow bookshelves along the walls. Fireplaces were discouraged, as they took up wall space that could be used for books. A layout with a central entry bay flanked by reading rooms was recommended. The basement was to include a lecture room, restrooms, storage and equipment rooms. A plain and dignified structure was desirable. Bertram discouraged elements like high domes, porticos, grand entries, and monumental steps. In general, the "Notes" stressed utility and did not include a discussion of beauty or style.⁸

⁵ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 3-4, 13-14, 159-160.

⁶ Ibid, 25.

⁷ Ibid, 40-41, 47, 58.

⁸ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 58-62; Abigail A. Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture 1890-1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 36.

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Six schematic floor plans were included. Plans "A" and "B," both rectangular in plan and one story in height, were considered ideal. Other plans were included for small lots or larger buildings. Bertram did not expect a great deal of departure from these plans. The Spencer Public Library closely resembles plan B, with only a few variations (see Description).⁹

Architecture

The Spencer Public Library was designed by Wilson B. Parker, an architect who designed at least 22 of the 164 Carnegie libraries in Indiana, more than any other architect. He was a partner in firms that are credited with three additional Carnegie libraries.¹⁰ In addition to his library commissions, several residences and institutional buildings in Indiana have been credited to Parker.

Parker was born in 1867 in Natick, Massachusetts. He was educated at the Peddie Institute in Hightstown, New Jersey, and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He worked for the New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White before moving to South Bend in 1892. Census records reveal that in 1900 he was living in South Bend as a lodger of Ennis Austin, an architect with whom he was professional associated. The two architects collaborated on the design of St. James Episcopal in South Bend Church (Gothic Revival, 1894). Among residences designed by Parker during this period are the Joseph Birdsell House in South Bend (Tudor Revival, 1898) and the Emmet Hoyt Scott House in LaPorte (Colonial Revival, 1901).¹¹

Parker moved to Indianapolis in 1903. From about 1907 and 1915, he was in partnership with Herbert Foltz. Among the firm's works were the Katharine Merrill Graydon House (Arts and Crafts, 1908) and the Hans and Dr. Alice Duden House (Arts and Crafts, 1909), both in Irvington. Parker designed the Joseph Shaf House (Colonial Revival, 1924), the Elias Atkins House (Colonial Revival, 1924), and his own residence at 5821 Guilford (Tudor Revival,

⁹ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 59-62.

¹⁰ Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003), 19.

¹¹ Historic Preservation Commission of South Bend and St. Joseph County, *City of South Bend Summary Report* (Indianapolis: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1993); Paul Diebold, *History and Architecture of Meridian Kessler* (Indianapolis: Meridian Kessler Neighborhood Association, 2005); Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, *LaPorte County Interim Report* (Indianapolis: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1989); U.S. Census of Population, 1900.

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1927), all in the Meridian-Kessler neighborhood of Indianapolis. He is also credited with the design of the Martinsville Sanitarium in Martinsville (Colonial Revival, 1925). Parker was recorded as living in Indianapolis in the 1920 Census, and his occupation was listed as architect. He was still living in Indiana in 1934, as evidenced by his participation in the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documentation of Shrewsbury House in Madison.¹²

Carnegie library buildings were designed by Parker between 1912 and 1922 in the following Indiana cities and towns: Brookville (Neoclassical, 1912), Indianapolis Spades Park Branch (Craftsman, 1912), Pendleton (Tudor Revival, 1912), Spencer (Craftsman, 1912), Plainfield (Craftsman, 1913), Waterloo (Craftsman, 1914), Liberty (Craftsman, 1915), Orleans (Craftsman, 1915), Shoals (Craftsman, 1915), Thorntown (Craftsman, 1915, NRHP), Westville (Craftsman, 1915), Roann (Craftsman, 1916), Brookston (Neoclassical/Craftsman, 1917), Williamsport (Neoclassical, 1917), Bloomington (Beaux Arts, 1918, NRHP), Flora (Craftsman, 1918), Rising Sun (Craftsman, 1918), Worthington (Craftsman, 1918), Vevay (Neoclassical, 1919), North Vernon (Neoclassical, 1920), LaPorte (Neoclassical, 1920), and Linden (Colonial Revival, 1922).¹³

Firms in which Parker was a partner are credited with the following Carnegie libraries: Indianapolis East Washington Branch, designed by Foltz and Parker (Tudor Revival, 1911), Monon, designed by Brookie and Parker (Neoclassical, 1915), and Hebron, designed by Parker and Honeywell (Craftsman, 1922).¹⁴

All of the library buildings designed by Parker and his firms are extant. According to the book *Temples of Knowledge*, 14 of these have been enlarged or remodeled.¹⁵ The Spencer Public Library is virtually unaltered. The building has had no additions since it was constructed, and retains most of its original features including windows and decorative elements. There have been a few minor changes over the years, such as replacement of exterior doors, and the

¹² U.S. Census of Population, 1920; HABS Record IN-8, Captain Charles L. Shrewsbury House; Paul Diebold, *History and Architecture of Meridian Kessler* (Indianapolis: Meridian Kessler Neighborhood Association, 2005); Paul Diebold, *Greater Irvington, Architecture, People and Places and the Indianapolis Eastside* (Indianapolis: Irvington Historical Society, 1997); Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, *Warren Township, Marion County Interim Report* (Indianapolis: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1993); Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, *Center Township, Marion County Interim Report* (Indianapolis: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1991).

¹³ Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

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division of the large basement room. Overall, however, the building has a high degree of integrity (see Description).

The contractor for the Spencer Public Library was A.E. Kemmer of Lafayette. Among other structures erected by the company are Lafayette Loan and Trust (1914), the Mars Theatre (1921) and the Indiana Pythian Home in Lafayette; Purdue Memorial Union (1922-24), Purdue Stadium (Ross-Ade Stadium, 1924) and Morton School (1925) in West Lafayette; Carroll County Courthouse (1917) in Delphi; and Lawrence County Courthouse (1930) in Bedford. No other Carnegie libraries in Indiana are known to have been constructed by this firm.

The Spencer Public Library is the only example of a Carnegie library in Owen County, and the county's best example of the Craftsman style of architecture. It was rated Outstanding in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Only two other examples of the style were identified in the Owen County survey, both residential: the Tom Dodd House in Gosport (31015, 1923); and a house at 406 W. Hillside Avenue in Spencer (38023, c.1910). Both houses were rated Contributing.¹⁶

The Craftsman style of architecture grew out of the Arts and Crafts movement around the turn of the 20th century and was a reaction to machine-made architecture. The style stressed simplicity in design and materials. Houses of the style are seen more widely than commercial and institutional buildings. Common features included wide eaves, exposed rafters, triangular knee braces or brackets under the eaves, and multi light window sash. Often, exterior materials were used in combination and might include stucco, rough stone, textured brick, and wood clapboards or shingles.

The Spencer Public Library displays characteristics of the style including brackets under the eaves, textured brick, and multi light upper sash. Inside the building, Craftsman-era features include dark oak woodwork; and a fireplace with green ceramic tile around the opening, and an oak mantle.

¹⁶ Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, *Owen County Interim Report* (Indianapolis: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 1994), 33, 44, 52.

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The Craftsman style was popular for Carnegie libraries in Indiana. In the book, *Temples of Knowledge*, 50 Carnegie buildings in the state were categorized as "Craftsman-Prairie Tradition." All but three of these are extant. The only style seen more frequently, with 54 examples, was "Neo Classical Revival."¹⁷

¹⁷ Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003), 231-233.

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Verbal Boundary Description

North half of Lot 98 of the Original Plat of the Town of Spencer

Boundary Justification

This is the original and current boundary for the Spencer Public Library.



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 7



Photo 14



Photo 17



Photo 19